REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application. However, in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks that follow, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding objections and rejections.

Objections:

With respect to the objections to claims 9-13, the preamble of those claims has been amended to obviate the objection made by the Examiner. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objections to claims 9-13.

35 U.S.C. §101:

In response to the rejection of claims 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. §101, the preamble of those claims has been amended to conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §101. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claims 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. §101.

Art Rejections:

Claims 1-7 and 15-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,073,188, hereinafter Fleming. Fleming discloses an electronic switch box for enabling a plurality of computers to share a plurality of peripheral devices. For example, as can be seen in Figures 1A and 2A, a plurality of computers C1 through Cn are connected to a switching device 102

through respective connections CN1 through CNn. The switching device 102 includes a switch 220 and a select logic 214 which enables a user to select one of the computers C1 through Cn. A common bus 212 connects the select logic 214 to the peripheral devices 202.

In response to the rejection based on Fleming, claim 1 has been carefully amended to distinguish over Fleming. Specifically, claim 1 now includes, among other things, the steps of instructing the concentrator device to select at least one of the active devices to manage; establishing a link between the communication port of the concentrator device and the management port of the concentrator device associated with the at least one selected active device; and communicating with the at least one selected activated device from the computer.

Thus, the method of claim 1 is the opposite of the teachings of Fleming. Specifically, Fleming selects one of the computers, not one of the peripheral devices. In contrast to Fleming, the method of claim 1 involves selecting one of the plurality of active devices to manage. And, according to the present invention, once one of the plurality of active devices is selected to be managed, the method includes establishing a link between the communication port of the concentrator device and the management port of the concentrator device associated with the at least one selected active device. Fleming involves a selection of a plurality of computers, and does not teach or suggest selecting between one or more active devices, or establishing a link between the communication port of the concentrator device and the management port of the concentrator device associated with the at least one selected active device.

Furthermore, Fleming does not teach or suggest the specifically claimed use of *management ports*. Note that the present specification explains that some active devices have both management ports and input/output ports. See paragraph [0003] of the published application (US 2005/0154808). Fleming appears to disclose only input/output ports in the peripheral devices.

Accordingly, Fleming does not teach or suggest the method of claim 1.

Claims 2-7 depend from claim 1, and are thus also patentable over Fleming.

Claim 15 has been amended to clarify that the executable code is configured to send signals to a concentrator device, receive signals from the concentrator device, receive an indication from a user interface of which of a plurality of active devices is to be selected to be managed, and wherein at least one of the signals sent to the concentrator device indicates one or more active devices to be managed. In contrast to claim 15, Fleming does not teach or suggest receiving an indication from a user interface of which of a plurality of active devices is selected to be managed. The select logic 214 in Fleming selects one of the computers, not one of the active devices. Furthermore, the selected computer in Fleming is not managed. Accordingly, Fleming does not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 15.

Claims 16-18 depend from claim 15, and are thus also patentable over Fleming.

Claims 8-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fleming in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,957,287, hereinafter Lou et al. To further clarify the differences between the applied prior art and claim 8, claim 8 has been carefully amended. Specifically, claim 8 now defines an apparatus for managing multiple active devices, the apparatus comprising at least one

communication port that is configured to be connected to a communication port of a computer; a plurality of management ports that are each configured to be connected to a management port of a respective one of the active devices, a switch for selectively connecting the at least one communication port to a selected one of the plurality of management ports, and a microprocessor configured to establish a link between the communication port and at least one selected management port.

As set forth above with respect to claim 1, the select logic 214 of Fleming selects one of the computers, not one of the peripheral devices. Accordingly, claim 8, as now amended, is clearly patentable over Fleming in view of Lou. Lou is relied upon by the Examiner for its teaching of a switching device for connecting computers to peripherals incorporating a processor to control and effectuate switching. Accordingly, the teachings of Lou relied upon by the Examiner do not otherwise overcome the deficiency of Fleming.

Claims 9-13 depend from Claim 8, and are thus also patentable over the applied prior art.

Claim 14 has also been rejected over Fleming in view of Lou. However, claim 14 has been substantively amended to clarify the differences between the subject matter therein and the applied prior art. Specifically, claim 14 now relates to a system for managing a plurality of active devices, wherein it is clear that the selection being made therein is of which of the active devices is to be managed by a computer. The system of claim 14 does not select a computer. As set forth above with regard to some of the other claims discussed herein, the select logic 214 of Fleming selects one of a plurality of computers, not one of the peripheral devices. Accordingly, amended claim 14 is also patentable over the applied prior art.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this response, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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